



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Grand Canyon National Park

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Grand Canyon News Release

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Grand Canyon National Park to begin operating a 100 percent dedicated fleet of compressed natural gas powered buses

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – The National Park Service (NPS) has purchased twenty new low-floor compressed natural gas (CNG) powered transit buses to be used as part of the visitor transportation system on the South Rim at Grand Canyon National Park.

These buses will replace the park's aging diesel and liquid natural gas (LNG) buses. With the addition of these new buses, Grand Canyon's entire visitor transportation system will become wheelchair accessible and will be operated using a 100 percent dedicated fleet of 29 CNG powered buses. The first of the new buses arrived on the South Rim April 25; the remaining 19 buses will arrive by June 13.

Grand Canyon's shuttle system began operating in 1974 with the goals of reducing parking congestion on the South Rim and improving the visitor experience. The voluntary shuttle system, which operates year round, consists of several routes and experiences approximately 4.5 million visitor boardings annually.

The replacement of the park's older diesel buses with CNG powered buses will further enhance the visitor experience by substantially reducing air pollutants and noise levels. The General Service Administration estimates that this bus replacement will result in the following annual reduction of tailpipe emission pollutants within the park:

- 18.5 tons/year of non-methane hydrocarbons

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- 176 tons/year of nitrous oxides
- 10 tons/year of diesel particulate matter (or soot)

“Having an entire fleet of CNG powered buses is a very holistic approach to Grand Canyon’s transportation needs,” said Carl Bowman, air quality specialist at Grand Canyon National Park. “People get cleaner engines, better air quality, and a better visitor experience overall.”

Grand Canyon National Park is a Class I area as defined by the Clean Air Act. The Act calls for the tightest restrictions of air pollutants in Class I areas to limit deterioration in air quality and protect uniquely scenic areas. Grand Canyon’s air quality is a fragile resource that is increasingly threatened by human activities, including pollutants from metropolitan areas in Arizona, Nevada and California. Although the Grand Canyon enjoys some of the cleanest air in the country, very small amounts of light-scattering pollutants can significantly reduce visibility at the park. This has a direct impact on visitors.

“Although most of the haze at the park is caused by outside sources, we are taking a step in the right direction by making improvements in the park,” said Bowman.

In addition to reducing air pollutants, such as nitrous oxides, the use of CNG powered buses at the Grand Canyon will reduce the park’s carbon footprint. Compressed natural gas vehicles emit less carbon dioxide, the most significant anthropogenic greenhouse gas contributing to global climate change, than their diesel counterparts.

Grand Canyon National Park began using CNG, which is considered to be a non petroleum alternative fuel under the federal Energy Policy Act of 1992, to fuel buses and other heavy equipment in 1998. The use of CNG is in compliance with the Energy Policy Act of 1992, 2005 and the more recent presidential Executive Order, E.O. 13423, which calls on federal agencies to reduce petroleum consumption by two percent and increase the use of non-petroleum based fuels by 10 percent annually through fiscal year 2015.

Beginning this summer, the new buses will be used throughout Grand Canyon’s South Rim Visitor Transportation System, including the new Tusayan Route, which will allow visitors to visit the park without a car.

For more information about the new CNG powered buses, please contact Robin Martin, concession program analyst and transportation director at Grand Canyon National Park, at (928)

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638-7684. For more general information about the South Rim's shuttle bus system, please visit <http://www.nps.gov/grca/planyourvisit/shuttle-buses.htm>. For additional information about park activities, please call (928) 638-7888 or visit <http://www.nps.gov/grca>.

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